



On the Soapbox

Sam Lennox, of Horsley Lodge GC, looks into his crystal ball and uncovers some interesting developments

A look at the future of Greenkeeping...

2014. The Self Maintaining Bunker.

Looking like a huge silver dish filled with sand and available in every conceivable shape the self-contained bunkers are lowered into place and sculpted around so they seamlessly blend in with their surroundings. A few of the key features include; automatic raking through a set of traversing metal prongs that rise up through the sand, unsurpassable water dispersion through superheating, compaction by vibration offering superior play and 'no more wash downs' with its patented Magna-Sand. It becomes the 'must have' for golf courses worldwide.

2020 Summit Sward.

A dominant grass that self-regulates its growing height from nine millimetres upwards and can be adjusted using sound frequency. With its 'No More Mowing' tagline. Summit now accounts for 99% of all Sports Turf and 100% of all Tees, Fairway and Outfields globally.

2030 The use of Light instead of Metal for mowing.

Inexpensive, robust and able to outperform cylinder mowing in every trial - the laser age comes to Greenkeeping. The greens mower retrofit photon cutting units become the industry standard.

2037 Tranquillity Lodge Opens.

The first lunar golf course opens to complement the new settlements. This development causes BIGGA to add 'Galactic' to its title and the BIGGGA magazine Issue 1 announces the first Greenkeeping vacancy.

2044 The GML Takeover.

With its popularity soaring, and a 10 million strong membership, the Golf Members League buys up the struggling International Golf Federation and, by hostile takeover, disbands the Intercontinental Golf Union. It rebrands itself as The Golf Authority Institution of Fairness.

2065 I Mow Robotics.

The mouse sized Greens Mowers are released at a price of £4.40 per unit and are the first fully automated mowers that are IQ200 powered. The little machines work in packs of 90 and can identify report and discuss any problems that affect optimum

play and advise the Greenkeeper of potential solutions. They use an innovative Swarm Mowing technique based on Chaos Theory that out-performs quadruple cutting by 907%.

2079 Electronic Education.

From March new Trainee Greenkeepers have to be skilled in both microelectronics and ACI Level Computer Programming to achieve Sports Turf NVQ-S level 2. This perpetuates a recent slump in new apprentices and concerns traditionalist's about the professions future.

2091 The Big Rename.

With Greenkeeping becoming office based and increasingly reliant on computers Greenkeepers are galactically rebranded as 'Golf Course Game Admins'. New trainee levels rise dramatically.

2102 Solid-O-Gram Forests.

The Solid Hologram technology is finally cleared for use on Golf Course obstructions and replaces every tree, wall and hedge with maintenance-free responsive replicas. The catchy slogans include:

A Resolution That's Better Than Real Life and Unobtainable Perfection?

2110 The GAIF Ban.

After a particularly bad round involving a noisy Greenkeeper chainsawing, the head of the Golf Authority Institution of Fairness declares new legislation Banning Game Admins from working on the Golf Course at any time for the benefit of Golfers. It is approved by all of the members and is set to begin in two years.

2110 The Alliance.

To establish all the products necessary to control a Golf Course fully remotely, the major Sports Turf companies form an alliance and create a central computer system called SPHERE.

It handles all the updates and key decision making for all the Alliance machines and creates an industry standard in digital communication. Many fear that the product has been rushed to market but the claims are refuted by GAIF.

2112 The Ban Begins.

All Greenkeepers are given a brand new job description which reads: To maintain the Golf Course to the highest standard by watching over the machines that watch over the machines.

2112 The Sphere Crisis.

Loss of data, rolling blackouts and incomprehensible glitches plague the SPHERE servers and the whole golf industry grinds to a freighting halt with I-Mows rendered useless in the middle of greens, Summit fairways growing over a meter high, Solid-O Gram trees in the shape of elephants, self-raking bunkers actively attacking golfers and GNOME 2 swallowing up huge areas of land. After four days SPHERE is turned off.

2112 Four Days Later.

Mr P Smith (81), Head Greenkeeper of Sudden Valley GC is seen on the 7th raking a bunker by hand. It spawns a new revolution in Greenkeeping.

After reading this my only advice is to give your apprentices a heads up on soldering, don't do anything hasty with your hand tools and look forward to no more bunker raking for 90+ years.

Don't let progress devalue traditional greenkeeping



Sam Lennox

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The views expressed within On The Soapbox are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International